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RUEHRN/USMISSION UN ROME

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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR AF/SPG, PRM, AND ALSO PASS USAID/W
USAID FOR DCHA SUDAN TEAM, AFR/SP
NAIROBI FOR USAID/DCHA/OFDA, USAID/REDSO, AND FAS
GENEVA FOR NKYLOH
NAIROBI FOR SFO
NSC FOR JBRAUSE, NSC/AFRICA FOR TSHORTLEY
USUN FOR TMALY
BRUSSELS FOR PLERNER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SUDAN - UPDATE ON THE NORTH-SOUTH TECHNICAL AD HOC BORDER
COMMITTEE

REF: KHARTOUM 1900

Summary

1. (U) In a meeting on August 16, the Assessment and Evaluation Commission's (AEC) Power Sharing Working Group Coordinator reported to the group that, according to the National Congress Party (NCP) Chair of the Technical Ad hoc Border Committee, the committee has made significant progress on the border issue in spite of some delays and intends to begin demarcation during the dry season of 2007. End summary.

NCP Chair of the Border Committee Comments

2. (U) In July 2006, the Italian Ambassador and the AEC Power Sharing Working Group Coordinator met with the Chair of the Technical Ad hoc Border Committee, Mohammed Khair Mohammed Ali, who also serves as the Director General of the Sudan Survey Department. Khair assured the Power Sharing Working Group Coordinator that the work of the Border Committee is proceeding, and there is good cooperation among the members. Khair claimed that the initial delay in the Border Committee's activities was caused by the absence of members of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM). The Border Committee had the first substantial meeting in May and now has a work plan for activities that was submitted to the Ministry of Finance. Khair was confident that the Government of National Unity (GNU) would fund all of the financial requirements.

3. (U) According to the Power Sharing Working Group Coordinator, Khair defined the Border Committee as purely technical. Khair said the Border Committee will demarcate the North-South border, from the West to the East, including the South Darfur/Northern Bahr El Ghazal border. Khair did not envisage any potential areas for disagreement between the parties, as all the maps examined by the Border Committee to date, from Sudan and the United Kingdom, are "coherent."

4. (U) Khair further attested that the current delay in the Border Committee's progress is due to technical and logistical reasons, such as the rainy season preventing the Border Committee from collecting field data. Khair claimed that the Border Committee will conclude the data collection phase of its work by January 2007. The

assessment on the ground will take place during the dry season and will conclude in late 2007.

Comment

15. (SBU) Per reftel, an SPLM member of the committee separately told USAID staff that despite repeated requests by the SPLM to convene the Border Committee, it has only met three times. The SPLM noted that no decisions have been rendered by the Border Committee regarding future activities. The SPLM member also contended that the NCP had altered at least one map it brought to a meeting of the Border Committee. Aside from viewing maps at that meeting, the SPLM members of the Border Committee have not been able to travel to the United Kingdom to review colonial maps or view them at the Sudan Survey Department in Khartoum. End Comment.

HUME